

We are thrilled to welcome our friends from Macedonia, Music Progressive Quartet (MPQ), to join us for this special concert. Their journey here comes after a partnership made when the WCSO toured Albania and Macedonia last summer. They are making their Canadian debut. They are sure to dazzle you with their energetic and virtuosic performance.

#### FEATURING



**Bujar Llapaj**  
Conductor

Albanian-born, multi-award winning conductor Bujar Llapaj is a prominent figure in the Balkan classical music scene. He received his formal training at the Academy of Arts in Tirana and the Conservatoire National de Rueil Malmaison in France. He was appointed as the Principal Conductor of the West Coast Symphony Orchestra in 2008. Bujar has conducted concerts throughout Europe and he still travels abroad as a guest conductor.



#### Music Progressive Quartet

Coming to us direct from Skopje, Macedonia, Music Progressive Quartet (MPQ) is comprised of four young, conservatory-trained, world-class professional classical musicians who play with the National Macedonian Philharmonic orchestra and guest with countless other groups and at numerous festivals in the Balkans and beyond.

In MPQ, they break out into another idiom, presenting a fresh jazz take on traditional folk songs of Macedonia. Beguiling audiences with total mastery of their instruments (violin, viola, cello, and oboe), innovative and witty arrangements, and a warm and engaging stage manner, they were a surprise break-out hit as soloists on the concert tour of West Coast Symphony in Macedonia in 2012. They are coming to Vancouver for their first time in another appearance with WCS. Members of MPQ are Vladimir Lazarevski on oboe; Vladimir Krstev, on violin; Marko Videnovik, on viola and as composer and arranger and Paskal Krapovski on cello.

#### PROGRAM NOTES

WRITTEN BY MARK JACKSON

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)

#### Overture to Les Troyens

If there were a way to describe the compositions of Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) it would be grand orchestration as tonight's performance will illustrate. The overture *Les Troyens*, written for the grand five act opera was based on the story of the rise and fall of lost city of Troy, but like many of his orchestral works it was written on such a grand scale (two full evenings to complete a performance) that it was never performed in its entirety until long after his death. After waiting five years to perform the work, Berlioz found a smaller venue for which a reduced performance of the last three acts was premiered. Berlioz was never satisfied with the abridged rendition and was critical of the inadequacies of all the parties involved.

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)

#### Symphonie Fantastique

In 1830 no orchestral work required as many musicians to perform as Berlioz's autobiographical *Symphonie Fantastique*, a work which helped establish Berlioz's reputation as a master of orchestral form and composition. In 1827, the twenty four year old Berlioz took in a performance of *Hamlet* given by a visiting English company in Paris whose principal actress of the performance, Harriet Smithson became the focus of Berlioz's infatuation for next two years and the focal point of the symphony. The first movements primary musical phrase heard throughout the remainder of the work embodies his thoughts of her. The second movement, a ball, Berlioz finds himself in a festive atmosphere in peaceful contemplation of the beautiful sights of nature while still haunted by the image in his mind of the person he adores. The third movement, a pastoral setting with two Sheppard's talking in the distance produces a sense of calm in his newly found hope in love, but dark premonitions stir with the distant sound of thunder. Ms. Smithson did not returned the letters that Berlioz wrote during these years so it is appropriate that the fourth movement "March to the scaffold" is based on love spurned. The artist shunned by his love tries to kill himself with opium, but the dose is insufficient and he suffers from hallucinations instead. Having believed that he has killed the object of his affection, the fifth and final movement "Dream of Witches Sabbath" begins with the condemned artist watching his own execution, surrounded by ghosts, sorcerers and monsters all gathering for his funeral. Leonard Bernstein once described the symphony as the first musical expedition into psychedelia because of its hallucinatory and dream-like nature.

#### OUR NEXT CONCERTS

Friday, June 7th 8pm

Christ Church Cathedral  
Vancouver

Sunday, June 9th 2pm

Bowen Island Community School  
Bowen Island